(b) and (c) Polyimide and related polyimide are of strategic importance. They find application in aircraft and automotive structures. These are ideally suited for use in electrical and electronics industries.

(d) and (f) VSSC, Trivandrum is reported to have developed laboratory scale process for the material. It is understood that based on VSSC process commercial plant for polyimide film is being set up at Hyderabad with the assistance of venture capital from TDICI, ICICI, etc.

IIT, Delhi and IIT Madras are reported to have done some basic research in the area.

(e) It is reported that IIT Kharagpur have produced on a laboratory scale polyimide resins and films with the properties comparable to those of samples imported.

IIT, Kharagpur reports such thing in professional journals and in all annual reports. Since the project costs are very large (Rs. 4 to 5 crores), Institute has not undertaken pilot scale projection.

Customs Duty on Erythromycin Thiocynate

4578. DR. ABRAR AHMED: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently reduced Customs Duty on import of various Drug intermediates;

(b) the rate of customs duty on import of Erythromycin Thiocynate (TIOC) 3-4 TMBA;

(c) the reasons for not reducing customs duty on TIOC; and

(d) the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The customs duty on raw materials/drug intermediates required for the production of bulk drugs/drug-intermediates has been reduced vide Ministry of Finance notification No. 250/92-Customs dated 31st July, 1992, and 215/92 and 217/92 both dated 19-6-1992.

(b) The Hon'ble Member is perhaps referring to drug intermediate Erythromycin Thiocynate (TIOC) and 3, 4, 5-TMBA. The current rate of customs duty on TIOC is 110 per cent and that on 3, 4, 5-TMBA is 70 per cent.

(c) and (d) Government had received some representations for reducing customs duty on TIOC, and the matter has already been referred to Ministry of Finance for their necessary action.

Legislation to control the price of drugs

4579. SHRI SUDHIR RANJAN MAJUMDAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that American Government are thinking of bringing a legislation to control the prices of drugs in view of exorbitant increases in prices inspite of free competition;

(b) if so, the reasons for liberalising when decontrol has resulted in steep increases in prices; and

(c) what were the pitfalls in 1987 policy which are sought to be removed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI CHINTA MOHAN): (a) Government is not aware of any steps being contemplated by the American Government in this regard.

(b) and (c) A background note on Review of Drug Policy, 1986 giving